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A new species of the genus *Epuraea* Erichson from Iran, and a replacement name for *E. castanea* (Duftschmid, 1825) (Coleoptera, Nitidulidae)

by

Paolo AUDISIO *

With 4 figures

ABSTRACT

Epuraea sengleti sp. n. is described from Iranian Kurdistan, and *Epuraea fageticola* nom. n. is proposed for the European *E. castanea* (Duftschmid, 1825) (= *Nitidula castanea* Duftschmid, 1825, non C.R. Sahlberg, 1820).

Apart from five species recorded recently by JELINEK (1981) (*Epuraea guttata* (Olivier, 1811), *E. marseuli* Reitter, 1872, *E. drapeta* Reitter, 1909, *E. unicolor* (Olivier, 1790) and *E. deleta* Sturm, 1844), nothing is known about the Iranian fauna of *Epuraea*.

Through the kindness of Claude Besuchet et Ivan Löbl, I was recently able to study additional material of the family Nitidulidae from Northern Iran, collected in the years 1973-1975 by E. Senglet, deposited in the Natural History Museum, Geneva.

The new material included a few specimens of two of the above mentioned species of *Epuraea* (*E. drapeta* Reitter and *E. unicolor* (Olivier)), a small series of *E. melanocephala* (Marshall) (Mazanderan prov.: new to Iran!) and two males belonging to a seventh species, new to science, which is described below.

Finally, I take the opportunity of proposing a replacement name for the well known European species *E. castanea* (Duftschmid, 1825), involved in a neglected case of primary homonymy. The species is included in a monograph on Western Palaearctic Nitidulidae and Kateretidae (AUDISIO, in press; for editorial reasons, descriptions of new taxa are not allowed in this monograph).

* Dipartimento di Zoologia, via Mezzocannone, 8, I-80134 Napoli, Italy.

Epuraea sengleti sp. n.

Type material: male holotype, N-Iran, Kurdistan, Kal'eh Dju, 35° 21' N/ 46° 17' E, A. Senglet leg., 15.IX.1975 (in the Natural History Museum, Geneva); paratype: N-Iran, Tehran prov., Firuzkuh, 35° 45' N/ 52° 46' E1, A. Senglet leg., 23.VII.1973, one male (in the author's collection, Rome).

Diagnosis: with its rather elongate body shape and almost truncate anterior margin of pronotum (fig. 1) the new species resembles the eurasian *E. longula* Erichson, from which it differs especially by the simple intermediate tibiae in males, by the coarser dorsal punctures and by the shape of male genitalia (figs. 2-4).

Description: Front flatly vaulted, separated from clypeus by shallow transverse impression. Anterior margin of clypeus truncate. Eyes moderately convex, coarsely faceted. Temples short, straight, converging posteriorly. Round punctures of front fairly equal in size to eye facets or feebly larger than them, separated by less than one diameter. Spaces between them somewhat reticulate, scarcely shining. Antennae as figured (fig. 1).

Pronotum widest somewhat behind its posterior third and there 1.75-1.80 times wider than long, distinctly narrowed posteriorly and even more so anteriorly (fig. 1). Posterior angles 1.35-1.37 times more apart than the anterior ones. Anterior margin almost truncate, somewhat feebly undulate; anterior angles obtuse and not strongly prominent. Sides arcuate, more strongly convergent anteriorly than posteriorly, broadly explanate. The explanate border at its midlength nearly as wide as antennal segment I., dilated only posteriorly. Basal margin truncate against scutellum, very shallowly emarginate beside obtuse and not prominent posterior angles (fig. 1). Surface of pronotum broadly and very feebly convex. Dorsal punctures round, slightly larger in size than eye facets, separated by one diameter or less. Spaces between them slightly reticulate but somewhat shining. Scutellum large, triangular, flatly punctate.

Elytra widest at about one third of their length, somewhat parallel-sided, hardly wider than pronotum, 1.26-1.28 times longer than their combined width, separately broadly rounded at the apex. Sutural angles almost rounded, humeral ones bluntly obtuse. Sides narrowly explanate, the explanate border at its midlength nearly as wide as antennal segment II. Dorsal surface very feebly transversely convex; punctures round, nearly equal in size to those of pronotum, becoming smaller distad, separated by nearly one diameter (fig. 1). Spaces between them as on pronotum. Pygidium broadly rounded at apex, rather coarsely and densely punctate.

Antennal grooves long, strongly converging posteriorly.

Prosternal process between procoxae longitudinally arcuate, dilated and broadly rounded at the apex.

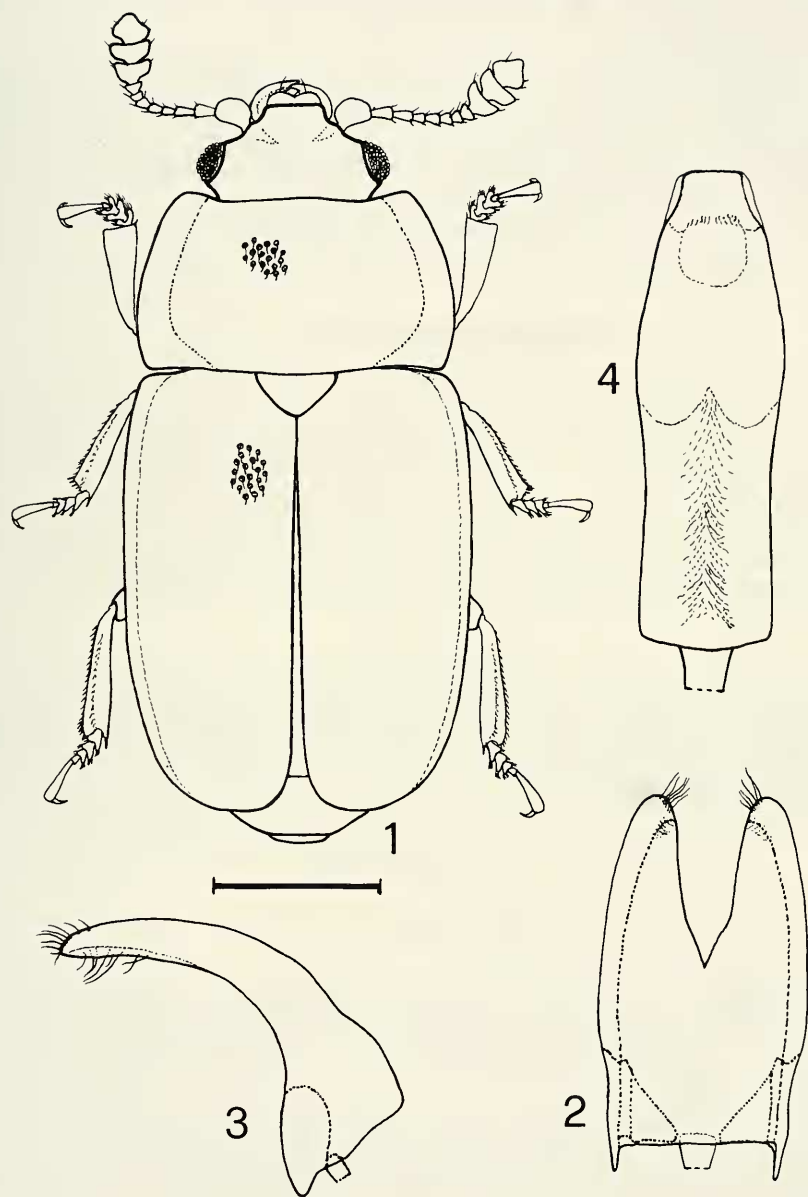
Mesosternum with transverse sutural furrow of prepectus widely incomplete in the middle.

Space between mesocoxae wider than middle portion of prosternal process.

Metasternum flattened in the middle, rather coarsely punctate, with very slightly impressed median longitudinal furrow; posterior margin between metacoxae narrow, obtusely angulosely emarginate.

Anterior tibiae nearly 3.5 times as long as wide, widest at the apex (fig. 1). Anterior tarsi two thirds as wide as anterior tibiae, tarsal claws simple. Mesotibiae simple, nearly 4.5 times as long as wide. Metatibiae simple, nearly 5 times as long as wide.

Male genitalia very weakly sclerotized. Tegmen (dorsal view) gradually narrowed distad, with large and deep V-shaped apical excision (fig. 2), parameres (lateral view) long and narrow (fig. 3); aedeagus widest at distal three fifths, gradually narrowed towards the broadly truncate apex (fig. 4).



FIGS. 1-4.

Epuraea sengleti sp. n., male paratype from Iran, Firuzkuh; 1, habitus (dorsal); 2, tegmen (dorsal); 3, tegmen (lateral); 4, aedeagus (dorsal). Scale bar = 0.17 mm (figs. 2-4); = 0.57 mm (fig. 1).

Body, legs and antennae uniformly testaceous; eye facets blackish. Pubescence golden, short but relatively conspicuous, somewhat erected.

Length 2.25-2.60 mm.; width 1.08-1.22 mm.

Female unknown.

Affinities: relationships of *E. sengleti* sp. n. are somewhat uncertain, in spite of the above mentioned general resemblance to the common and widely distributed *E. longula* Erichson. The new species could be related also to the European *E. muehli* Reitter, both having simple mesotibiae in males and not strongly emarginate anterior margin of pronotum; however, the former is easily distinguishable from the latter by the coarser dorsal punctures with more erected hairs, by the less deeply and less arcuately emarginate anterior margin of pronotum and by the quite different male genitalia.

***Epuraea castanea* (Duftschmid, 1825)**

This rare European species has been described by DUFTSCHMID (1825) as *Nitidula castanea*. Unhappily, Sahlberg (1820) described a *Nitidula castanea* (now classified as junior synonym of *Nitidula rufipes* (Linnaeus, 1761)), which is in fact senior homonym of the Duftschmid's taxon.

No synonyms being available for *Epuraea castanea* (Duftschmid) (*Epuraea fennica* J. Sahlberg, 1889, listed by GROUVELLE (1913) as synonym of *E. castanea*, is in fact synonym of *E. variegata* (Herbst, 1793); HELLEN, 1926; AUDISIO, in press), a replacement name is thus necessary for *Epuraea castanea* (Duftschmid). I propose:

***Epuraea fageticola* nom. n.**

Derivatio nominis: the new name has been chosen to lay stress on the usually close relationship between this species and mature beech forests belonging to the *Fagetum* phytosociological association.

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